Amendment to the Claims

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

1. (Currently Amended) A method of providing audio caller identification, comprising ~~the steps of~~:

receiving a call, the call being associated with a directory number;

querying a ~~network~~ database ~~in a telecommunications network~~ for caller identification information, wherein the caller identification information comprises at least one of the directory number associated with the call and a name associated with a calling party;

sending the caller identification information to a caller identification device; and

synthesizing and playing an audio message related to the caller identification information associated with the call and contemporaneously displaying the caller identification information associated with the call on the caller identification device, wherein the audio message is stored by the telecommunications network ~~and wherein the caller identification information comprises directory information~~.

2. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 1, further comprising ~~the steps of~~:

prior to ~~the step of~~ synthesizing and playing an audio message, saving a recorded audio message associated with a directory number;

comparing the directory number associated with the call with the directory number associated with the recorded audio message;

if the directory number associated with the call matches the directory number associated with the recorded audio message, playing the recorded audio message and ~~contemporaneously~~ displaying the caller identification information associated with the call; and

if the directory number associated with the call does not match the directory number associated with the recorded audio message, then ~~performing the step of~~ synthesizing and playing an audio message related to the caller identification information associated with the call, and contemporaneously displaying the caller identification information associated with the call.

3. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 2, further comprising ~~the steps of~~:

wherein the step of sending the caller identification information to a caller identification device includes ringing a telephone to which the caller identification device is functionally connected;

wherein ~~the step of~~ playing the recorded audio message and contemporaneously displaying the caller identification information associated with the call includes suspending ringing the telephone while playing the recorded audio message; and

wherein ~~the step of~~ synthesizing and playing an audio message related to the caller identification information associated with the call, and contemporaneously displaying the caller identification information associated with the call includes suspending ringing the telephone while playing the ~~recorded~~ audio message.

4. (Previously Amended) The method of Claim 1, wherein the audio message is played over a speaker functionally connected to the caller identification device.

5. (Currently Amended) A method of providing audio caller identification in a network ~~an Advanced Intelligent Network~~, including a switch, a query module ~~service control point~~, an intelligent routing module ~~a service node~~ and a database of caller identification information, ~~wherein the service control point and the service node are functionally connected to the switch, and~~ wherein the method comprises ~~the steps of~~:

receiving a call from a calling party at a calling party switch directed to a called party at a called party switch;

sending call information associated with the call to the query module ~~service control point~~, the call information including the directory number of the calling party;

at the query module ~~service control point~~, querying the database of caller identification information for caller identification information associated with the call, wherein the caller identification information comprises at least one of the directory number and a name associated with the calling party;

causing the intelligent routing module ~~service node~~ to synthesize and send an audio message related to the caller identification information associated with the call to a called party caller identification device via the called party switch; and

causing ~~at~~ the called party caller identification device to [[,]] play ~~playing~~ the audio message and contemporaneously display ~~displaying~~ the caller identification information associated with the call~~, wherein the caller identification information comprises directory information~~.

6. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 5, further comprising the steps of:

prior to ~~the step of~~ synthesizing and sending an audio message, saving a recorded audio message associated with a directory number;

at the intelligent routing module ~~service node~~, comparing the directory number associated with the call with the directory number associated with the recorded audio message;

if the directory number associated with the call matches the directory number associated with the recorded audio message, sending the recorded audio message to a called party caller identification device via the called party switch;

causing ~~at~~ the called party caller identification device to play ~~, playing~~ the recorded audio message and contemporaneously display ~~displaying~~ the caller identification information associated with the call; and

if the directory number associated with the call does not match the directory number associated with the recorded audio message, then ~~performing the step of~~ causing the intelligent routing module ~~service node~~ to synthesize and send an audio message related to the caller identification information associated with the call to a called party caller identification device via the called party switch.

7. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 6, further comprising the steps of:

after the step of receiving a call from a calling party at a calling party switch directed to a called party at a called party switch, receiving at the intelligent routing module ~~service node~~ a recorded audio message from the calling party directed to the called party;

sending the recorded audio message from the calling party to a called party caller identification device via the called party switch;

causing ~~at~~ the called party caller identification device to play ~~, playing~~ the recorded audio message from the calling party and display ~~displaying~~ the caller identification information associated with the call; and

if no recorded audio message is received from the calling party directed to the called party, then: ~~then performing the steps of~~;

if the directory number associated with the call matches the directory number associated with the recorded audio message, sending the recorded audio message to a called party caller identification device via the called party switch;

causing ~~at~~ the called party caller identification device to play~~, playing~~ the recorded audio message and contemporaneously display ~~displaying~~ the caller identification information associated with the call; and

if the directory number associated with the call does not match the directory number associated with the recorded audio message, then ~~performing the step of~~ causing the intelligent routing module ~~service node~~ to synthesize and send an audio message related to the caller

identification information associated with the call to a called party caller identification device via the called party switch.

8. (Currently Amended) A system for providing audio caller identification, comprising:

a software module operative: ~~operative~~

to query a ~~network~~ database ~~in a telecommunications network~~ for caller identification information associated with a call from a calling party to a called party, the call being associated with a directory number, wherein the caller identification information comprises at least one of the directory number and a name associated with the calling party;

to send the caller identification information to a caller identification device;

the caller identification device, operative

to receive the caller identification information;

to synthesize and play an audio message related to the caller identification information associated with the call, and to contemporaneously display the caller identification information associated with the call on the caller identification device, ~~wherein the caller identification information comprises the directory number, wherein the caller identification information comprises directory information, and~~ wherein the audio message is stored by the telecommunications network for playback by a speaker functionally connected to the caller identification device.

9. (Currently Amended) The system of claim 8, wherein the caller identification device is further operative: ~~operative~~

~~to save a recorded audio message associated with a directory number prior to synthesizing and playing an audio message~~;

to compare the directory number associated with the call with the directory number associated with the ~~recorded~~ audio message;

if the directory number associated with the call matches the directory number associated with the ~~recorded~~ audio message, to play the ~~recorded~~ audio message and to contemporaneously display the caller identification information associated with the call; and

if the directory number associated with the call does not match the directory number associated with the ~~recorded~~ audio message, then to synthesize and play an audio message related to the caller identification information associated with the call, and to display the caller identification information associated with the call.

10. (Currently Amended) A method of providing audio caller identification, comprising ~~the steps of~~:

saving a recorded audio message associated with a directory number;

receiving a call, the call being associated with the directory number;

querying a database for caller identification information associated with the call, wherein the caller identification information comprises at least one of the directory number and a name associated with the calling party;

sending the caller identification information to a caller identification device~~, wherein the caller identification information comprises directory information~~;

comparing the directory number associated with the call with the directory number associated with the recorded audio message;

if the directory number associated with the call matches the directory number associated with the recorded message, causing ~~playing~~ the recorded audio message to play and to contemporaneously display ~~displaying~~ the caller identification information associated with the call on the caller identification device; and

if the directory number associated with the call does not match the directory number associated with the recorded message, calling the caller identification device to synthesize and play ~~synthesizing and playing~~ an audio message related to the caller identification information associated with the call[[,]] and contemporaneously displaying the caller identification information associated with the call ~~on the caller identification device~~.

11. (New) The method of claim 6, wherein causing the party caller identification device to play the recorded audio message and contemporaneously display the caller identification information associated with the call comprises causing the called party caller identification device to suspend ringing the telephone while playing the recorded audio message.

12. (New) The method of claim 5, wherein the audio message is played over a speaker functionally connected to the caller identification device.

13. (New) The method of claim 5, wherein the network comprises an Advanced Intelligent Network.

14. (New) The method of claim 5, wherein the query module is a service control point in the advanced intelligent network.

15. (New) The method of claim 5, wherein the intelligent routing module is a service node in the advanced intelligent network.

16. (New) The system of claim 8, wherein the telecommunications network is an advanced intelligent network and wherein the audio message is stored in a service node in the advanced intelligent network.

17. (New) The method of claim 10, wherein ~~the step~~ of sending the caller identification information to a caller identification device includes ringing a telephone to which the caller identification device is functionally connected.

18. (New) The method of claim 10, wherein ~~the step~~ of playing the recorded audio message and contemporaneously displaying the caller identification information associated with the call includes suspending ringing the telephone while playing the recorded audio message.

19. (New) The method of claim 10, wherein ~~the step~~ of synthesizing and playing an audio message related to the caller identification information associated with the call, and contemporaneously displaying the caller identification information associated with the call includes suspending ringing the telephone while playing the audio message.

20. (New) The method of claim 10, wherein the audio message is played over a speaker functionally connected to the caller identification device.